

We do not profess to effect what is possible to be effected, or what shall yet be effected by brethren under more favourable circumstances, with more time and literary ability at command. Our work is merely that of a pioneer, and such under the most favoured circumstances must meet with hinderances and obstructions, and desirable results cannot be otherwise than of slow attainment. Our present effort and struggle is for mere existence, this is all we can hope for. Like a youthful pioneer in the forest, labouring hard and surrounded with difficulties, yet with strong and healthful being forces his way onward, and though his fare may be homely, and his dwelling a shanty, yet he is inspired with hope, that he shall yet occupy a position equal to his older and more favoured neighbours.

Wesleyan Methodism has exerted, from the first, a powerful influence in Western Canada ; in its secluded settlements, just emerging from the primeval forests, with their humble shanties, as well as through every grade of improvement and progress to its towns and cities. The circumstances of our people have been constantly on the advance, from toil to ease, from privation to affluence, from seclusion to publicity ; and their mental improvements have nearly kept pace therewith. Wesleyan Ministers have been the advance guard of the people in knowledge, especially religious knowledge, and much of the taste and yearning for general, useful knowledge, may be attributed to their intercourse with them.

As early as 1829, when the total white membership of our Church was only 9,156, or about one-sixth of what it is at present, and when there was not one-tenth of our wealth, the "Christian Guardian" was established. At the Conference of the year following it was resolved to erect buildings at Cobourg for an Academy, which a few years afterwards was incorporated as Victoria College. Then the Book Room was called into existence, and in a brief period became a really prosperous establishment. Of all our four hundred Ministers, not one in ten, now in the active work, has had a share in the toil, or contributed to the expenses of the above institutions. And what have we effected since in their advance, and in keeping pace with the further constantly increasing literary wants of our people? A generation has nearly passed away, and yet these institutions, instead of having become productive in kindred institutions and alliances, have become encumbered, and their energies and usefulness cramped and hindered through our apathy and our selfishness. Large as the circulation of the "Christian Guardian" is, it ought to be double the number. The Book